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July 11, 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Meeting of the Special Group (CI)
 2 p.m., Thursday, July 11, 1963

PRESENT: Mr. Johnson vice Governor Harriman, The Attorney General, General Taylor, Mr. McCone, Mr. Forrestal, Mr. Coffin vice Mr. Bell, Mr. Wilson vice Mr. Murrow, Mr. Bundy vice Mr. Gilpatric

Mr. Hilsman and Mr. Koren were present for Items 1 and 2.

Mr. Koenig and Mr. Duggan were present for Item No. 3.

General Krulak, Mr. Nolan and Mr. Maechling were present for the meeting.

NSC REVIEW
COMPLETED,
6/26/2003

1. Southeast Asia Status Report

Thailand - Mr. Koren commented that an U.S./Thai agreement was signed for construction on a 50-50 cost sharing basis of the two highest-priority security roads. It is planned for these roads to be useable in January, 1965, and completed in June of that year. Following a discussion of the cost of these roads, Mr. Koren stated that the Embassy is reviewing future requirements for road construction.

In response to General Taylor's question regarding Sarit's present attitude, Mr. Koren remarked that Sarit was primarily concerned over developments in Laos. A general discussion followed on the status of assistance being provided to Laos.

Mr. Koren reported that plans for the utilization of the portable 50 KW radio transmitter are going well. A U.S. site survey team, in collaboration with the Thais, is now deciding on a suitable location for the transmitter.

Mr. Bundy commented that the delivery of equipment to support the Mobile Development Units is on schedule.

Viet-Nam - Mr. Koren observed that the entire situation in Viet-Nam is overshadowed by the Buddhist problem. This problem has become a rallying point for all dissidents. Tension is mounting and some Buddhist elements may not be satisfied by any effort of the Government to reconcile their differences. Mr. Hilsman interjected that so far this situation has not adversely affected the war effort and that tension is confined to the urban areas and to those elements seeking to take advantage of the situation. Mr. McCone added that an estimate recently completed on Viet-Nam points out the seriousness of this problem.

General Krulak reviewed for the Group the conclusions contained in the report on his recent trip to Viet-Nam. In expanding on these conclusions,

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he stated that: The total number of returnees under the Amnesty Program now stands at about 12,000; Operation Switchback is going well; operating relationships between U.S. advisors and their Vietnamese counterparts are excellent; U.S. and GVN officials believe the strategic hamlet program is not expanding too rapidly, contrary to comments previously made to the Group by [redacted] and hard evidence of infiltration from Laos is difficult to obtain, but he believed that key cadre personnel were being infiltrated.

Mr. Hilsman stated that the psychological warfare effort in Viet-Nam would be improved if it was oriented to exploit specific rather than general Viet Cong targets. General Krulak agreed with this observation and added that the current trend is in this direction.

The reports on the Montagnard and Amnesty Programs were noted by the Group.

Cambodia - No comments were made on this section of the report.

2. Report on Programs to Restrict Infiltration into Northeast Thailand

Mr. Koren commented that no firm statistics exist on the number of Communist infiltrators into Thailand. The last census was held in 1960 with the next one scheduled for 1970. A National Registration Program was begun in mid-1962, but the program has proceeded very slowly due to a shortage of trained Thai personnel. A progress report on this program has been requested from the field to determine if additional assistance is needed.

The Attorney General stated that he was concerned about the situation in Thailand and stressed that steps taken now will benefit the U.S. in coping with problems that may develop in the future. The Group discussed the need for more expeditious action in the National Registration Program, village administration, and programs to increase the effectiveness of the Border Patrol Police. Mr. Hilsman agreed to follow through on this matter.

3. Counterinsurgency Training

The Group noted with interest the display of military counterinsurgency training material. General Krulak indicated that his office is responsible for reviewing the content of counterinsurgency courses taught at the various military schools and actions are being taken to correct the tendency to teach the same subjects in the same way at all levels.

During a general discussion on the overall CI training effort, the question arose as to whether the Training Committee had done anything to review the content of any courses other than the Interdepartmental Seminar. It was explained to the Group that the Training Committee largely concentrated on the Interdepartmental Seminar and the preparation of case studies.

The Group agreed with General Taylor's suggestion that the Training Committee should coordinate the overall effort of instruction in counter-insurgency. This should assist in assuring that a common doctrine is taught,

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exchange of instructional material is accomplished, and that instruction is oriented to case studies and other specifics.

The Attorney General commented that Foreign Service Officers should be trained in the specifics on how to deal with counterinsurgency early in their careers. He also stressed the importance of including youth and labor in counterinsurgency instruction.

The Group requested that the Chairman of the Training Committee be present at the next meeting to describe what it has already accomplished in this area and to indicate what program it should undertake to review the curriculum content of Governmental courses other than the Interdepartmental Seminar that contain a counterinsurgency component.

Miscellaneous

A. The Group agreed that monthly status reports would continue to be submitted on Thailand and Viet-Nam, but that quarterly reports based on the IDP for Cambodia will fulfill this reporting requirement.

James W. Dingeman
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Executive Secretary
Special Group (CI)

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